

THE LEISURE HOUR.

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Cowper.*



"YOU WILL THINK OF US POOR WANDERERS SOMETIMES," SAID MR. RIVERS.

HURLOCK CHASE.

BY G. H. SARGENT, AUTHOR OF "STORY OF A CITY AHEAD."

CHAPTER XXXVI.—FAR AWAY.

THE incidents of our story require us to transport ourselves, in this and some succeeding chapters, to a small settlement in Canada, near the borders of the river St. Lawrence. Without entering into needless particulars concerning those long-past days of Canadian history, it is sufficient to say that the then recent conquest of that country, and the subsequent issue of the great American war of independence, gave an impetus to colonization on

this new ground; and that many American royalists, who had made themselves conspicuous and obnoxious by their unavailing resistance to the popular and triumphant cause, retired to that portion of the continent in which a preference to monarchical rule was considered no crime, and allegiance to the sovereign of Great Britain was looked upon as a virtue.

The privations endured by many of these new colonists were neither few nor insignificant. The climate was severe. The country into which they plunged was scantily inhabited and lonely. The enormous forests which surrounded them, however grand and beautiful in

the eyes of naturalists, were dark and gloomy, and not without danger; for the aboriginal Indians were not entirely subdued. The labour required in first reclaiming the wilderness was great and depressing; while ague and fever, and other enemies to the human frame, were ready at hand, in swamps and thickets, in the evening damps and the mid-day heat, to spring out upon the anxious pioneer, paralysing his arm and saddening his heart.

In spite of these drawbacks, however, the new colonists in general prospered. Often repulsed, they were not conquered, but, returning with steady perseverance to the battle of life, made gradual, if slow, advances towards comfort and ultimate prosperity.

This, at least, was the case with regard to the principal personage in the settlement just referred to. Mr. Vincent was an elderly man; he had been an officer in the royalist army, and had fought bravely but unavailingly in defence of the crown, until peace was at length settled and the armies of England were withdrawn. Then, declining to return to the mother-country, he threw up his commission; but, not choosing to remain on republican soil, he availed himself of certain facilities offered to him, and retired to the more newly acquired and loyal colony of his sovereign.

There was nothing very strange in this determination; for, amidst the toils and anxieties of his campaign, the soldier had found time and opportunity to marry. His young wife was the daughter of a fellow-officer, who fell in an engagement in which he himself was severely wounded; and, at the conclusion of the war, both Captain Vincent and his young wife were glad to settle down to the peaceful though arduous occupations of a backwoods life.

It would be incorrect to say that, on retiring from active military service, the new settler and his two or three followers "beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks." They were rather like the Jews, who, on returning from captivity, had to rebuild their beloved Jerusalem, and of whom we are told that "they which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon. For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded." In fact, the perils of the wilderness were almost as great, and far more incessant than those of the tented field. But, gradually, these perils passed away, and in the course of years a smiling panorama of fields waving with corn, and pastures covered with flocks, surrounded the substantial and extensive homestead which had superseded the original log-hut of the Vincents.

Worldly prosperity, however, though untainted by any doubtful modes of acquisition, is no gauge of human felicity; and our settlers had their share of sorrows. Death entered their habitation again and again, taking from them the desires of their eyes, the beloved of their hearts. Only two of their eight children survived the tender years of childhood; and in a skirmish with a party of Indians one of these, a youth of much promise, was mortally wounded when about fifteen years old. From the shock produced by this heavy and sore trial the bereaved mother never entirely recovered. Her heart seemed to be buried with her son; and, after lingering two years in humble resignation, she died, and was buried by his side, leaving her widowed husband, now well stricken in years, and her eldest and sole surviving child, to weep over her grave. This child was a daughter, who, notwithstanding the hardships and rough training of a life in the backwoods, and the almost

total want of society beyond that of her parents and their retainers, had grown up to be an exceedingly lovely and in many respects accomplished young woman. This latter circumstance may be accounted for by the fact that both Captain Vincent and his wife were persons of superior education, and, before their voluntary exile, had been accustomed to good society, either in the revolted colonies or elsewhere.

The death of Mrs. Vincent produced a powerful and perhaps natural effect on both the mourning survivors. The husband was prostrated with grief. Thenceforth he lost almost all interest in the world around him, and in the familiar scenes of his extensive property. Mind and body alike were slowly but surely declining under the withering sorrow. From a robust and hale forester he shrunk into a feeble and ailing man—prematurely aged—without settled aim or purpose, with one constant care and trouble corroding his heart and drying up his springs of life. To every gentle remonstrance of his daughter he had one unvarying and sorrowful reply: "'Evil shall hunt the violent man to overthrow him.' I thought I should escape the curse; but it has found me out. Wife, children, all but you, Rose, taken away, while other families multiply and increase; your brother killed in a petty skirmish from which others came off unharmed; it wants but one more stroke, my poor Rose, to make my overthrow complete, and to fill up the measure of my doom." It was thus that the bereaved man rang mournful changes on his misery.

The effect produced on Rose Vincent by the loss of her mother was, happily, of another character. Deeply as she deplored this loss, instead of sinking into despondency, she was roused by it to exertion. A hundred occupations which before had received from her only a comparatively small and trifling share of attention were now taken up from a sense of stern and imperative duty; and the first victory over a natural but injurious indulgence in grief strengthened the young heroine for further conquests. Possibly, the fact of her father having at length succumbed to his repeated trials was so far beneficial to the motherless girl as that she felt herself called upon to be his consoler, or, if this were beyond her power, to shield him from the external consequences of his almost utter neglect of the affairs of his farm, by taking the management of it into her own hands. At all events, from whatever cause, Rose Vincent—without losing any essential delicacy of character—came soon, young as she was, to be looked upon by the men on the farm, who had also formed its body-guard in past times of alarm, as a proper woman of spirit, and to be quoted by her nearest neighbours—who, it may be observed, lived at the distance of five-and-twenty or thirty miles—as a model by which they wished to form the characters of their own rising daughters.

But the greatest charm of all, and that which gave intrinsic value to every other beauty in Rose's character, was her simple piety and enduring faith in God. At her mother's knee she had learned to think of her Father in heaven as a glorious Being of unbounded love and compassion; from her mother's lips she had been taught to utter with reverence the name which is above every name, and to offer prayers, through his ever-prevalent intercession, to the Holy One who inhabiteth eternity. As she grew older she was manifestly drawn by supernatural influence to a closer communion with her Saviour God, and to stronger faith in his love and overruling power. With the Bible alone, in the absence of almost all other outward means of grace, to guide her in her pathway through life, she followed its teachings with the simplicity of a child; and the very trials she was called

to endure served to strengthen and ripen her religious character. We could enlarge and expatiate very much on this subject; but ours is a tale of past times, and not a Christian biography.

Apart from Rose Vincent's bereavement, and the effects of their common sorrows on her father's mind and actions, there was another trouble which bore hardly on the sensitive girl: this was her father's guarded silence respecting his earlier life. That he was not a born colonist; that he was well acquainted with England; that he had travelled on the continent of Europe; that he had not taken up the profession of arms till later in life than was customary with professional soldiers—all this Rose had gathered from some incidental observations her father had suffered to escape, or from more confidential conversations with her departed mother. But beyond this general information Rose knew nothing of her father's history; and whenever she accidentally approached the subject he evidently became disquieted and almost angry. This was the more troubling to her, because she could not help surmising that his present distress was in some mysterious way (mysterious to Rose, we mean) increased by the memories of some long-distant past. "If I could only get my dear father to speak of his old sorrows," she thought to herself, "I might and should know better how to comfort him; but, ignorant as I am of their cause, how can I tell that I may not be constantly opening up some unhealed wound in his heart by words unconsciously and incautiously spoken?"

The reader of this narrative will easily have identified Captain Vincent with the Vincent Fleming of our earlier chapters. Had we wished to conceal this connection, and so create a surprise at last, a thousand other names were at our choice, under cover of which we might have worked out the hidden plot until it was ripe for its *dénouement*. But, eschewing on this occasion any attempt at dramatic effect, we have only to account, in a few words, for the disappearance of the unhappy man, as told in the former part of our history, and his present reappearance in a distant part of the world, so many years afterwards.

Simply, then, driven by remorse for his complicity in a culpable though involuntary homicide, and believing that his sisters must of necessity thenceforward regard him with settled aversion and horror, Vincent Fleming wandered for awhile through several continental countries, carefully avoiding all intercourse with Englishmen, and adopting the language and manners of those among whom he sojourned. One good effect of his deep grief was, that he forswore gambling from that time forth; and the limited funds with which he was provided at the time of the dire catastrophe being well husbanded, sufficed for his new and almost penurious mode of existence. It did not enter into his mind that his determined silence, and his perpetual self-banishment, would necessarily involve his sisters in additional distress of mind and much complicated embarrassment in worldly affairs; but, like many other persons who act all their lives under the influence of misguided impulse, he took for granted that the course he pursued must necessarily be the right one, because he pursued it.

After some time spent in studied seclusion and self-abandoned wretchedness, Vincent Fleming fell dangerously ill. He was at that time lodging in a goatherd's cottage in Switzerland, and he was indebted to the care and attention of the peasant's wife for his ultimate recovery. With convalescence came a feeling of disgust with himself for his past inaction, and a craving desire to return into the world. It was necessary, too, for him to decide on some change in his life; for the resources

at his immediate command were not inexhaustible, nor could he replenish his exchequer from home without the risk of betraying his hiding-place.

He bade adieu, therefore, to his entertainers and preservers, crossed the Alps, made his way through France to Holland, and embarked for America with some vague and indefinite notions of employing the remnant of his funds in mercantile pursuits. Long before this he had abandoned the name which, in his mind and in the knowledge of others, was too intimately associated with his former career of vicious dissipation and with the cause of his lasting remorse. By some freak of fancy, however, he chose to retain his given name, and called himself George Vincent.

As George Vincent, then, the fugitive entered on the stage of busy, bustling life in one of the flourishing towns of the New World; and, prospering beyond his expectations in the first ventures he made, he might have lived and died in contented obscurity if the quarrel had not broken out between the colony and the mother-country—a quarrel in which none who lived on the spot were expected to be neutral. Vincent's decision was soon made. Right or wrong, he determined to adhere to the cause of his own native land, gave up his commercial occupations, secured in the best way he was able the small fortune he had already realized, joined the forces of England, and found his loyalty soon rewarded by a commission. What followed has already been briefly recorded.

It is not to be supposed that, in these later years, Vincent Fleming had forgotten the events of his earlier history; but time and occupation brought with them some alleviation from the pains of his remorse, and the new connections he formed opened to him a happier future than he had formerly dared to hope for. Sometimes, indeed, he thought of his sisters with regret, and justly accused himself of having caused them much sorrow. But this very conviction made him shrink from communicating to them even the fact of his own continued existence. "Better that I should be forgotten," he thought. "They are at least well provided for. They hold possession of the old Priory, precious ruins and all, in which they will never be disturbed while they live." What was to happen after then he left an open question with himself.

As time wore on, and the settler's prosperity increased, it is probable that his thoughts, when turned towards his old home, lost much of their former poignancy, until the last strokes which laid his frail superstructure of earthly happiness so very low. Then memory was once more clothed with terror; for it seemed to him that vengeance, though long delayed, had asserted its right to pursue him and crush his very soul; and the comfort which he might have derived from his remaining child—his Rose of the wilderness—was blasted by the belief that she too was doomed to misery and destruction, in expiation of his own guilt.

CHAPTER XXXVII.—UNEXPECTED GUESTS.

ONE day, in the early summer of the year which our story has reached, the solitude of Captain Vincent's settlement was invaded by a rather numerous party of unexpected strangers. Only those who have lived many years in the wilderness can rightly and fully estimate the pleasure of social intercourse; so that a new face, if it makes its appearance with a friendly smile, calls forth warmer greetings and more profuse hospitality than sometimes, under other circumstances, would be accorded to a familiar acquaintance or an old friend.

In the present instance the guests had no reason to

complain of any want of cordial welcome. They were ten in number: of these, six were Englishmen, recently arrived in the country; two were colonists of good position, and officially connected with the Government; the remaining two were friendly Indian guides.

Their story was soon told. They formed part of an exploring expedition sent out by the home Government; their objects were partly political and partly scientific; their destination was understood to be some point in the far north, not exactly defined; their immediate route was to be determined by circumstances; and the time to be occupied in the expedition, as well as its ultimate success, was necessarily to depend on their powers of endurance and the resources which might fall in their way. They were well furnished with appliances for their hazardous undertaking, and were in high spirits, and jubilant in anticipation of the adventures which lay before them—especially the newly imported Englishmen. The two colonials were more sedate in their demeanour, as being more fully aware of the perils and privations they must necessarily pass through, and yet unwilling to damp the ardour of their younger and less experienced companions. The Indian guides alone maintained a gravity which either denoted or counterfeited indifference, and seemed to look with philosophical contempt upon the mercurial society into which for a time they were thrown. This party was separated by two or three days' journey from an equally numerous body, composed of more hardy and accustomed veterans, who had charge of the greater part of their stores, and whom they had preceded, having previously appointed to join at a spot many miles away, to which their Indians were conducting them through the intricacies of the forest.

The irruption of such a numerous party in the small settlement may be supposed to have caused some inconvenience and embarrassment to the settlers. These slight difficulties, however, were speedily overcome; the hospitable board was soon covered with abundant provisions; beds were made up in every available nook of the farm-house for the white men, the Indians being permitted to follow their own inclinations and devices in camping in the neighbouring forest; and the chiefs of the party were given to understand that the longer they remained at the settlement, the better pleased would be their entertainers.

In fact, apart from the pleasure of exercising the rites of hospitality, and the relief from the monotony of a backwoods life thus afforded to Captain Vincent and his daughter, with their dependents, the visitors brought with them abundant compensation for the trouble they occasioned, in the new life and energy they imparted to the morbid-minded widower, who, for the time, lost sight of his sorrows and dismal apprehensions in the new society thus imposed upon him. Besides this, the strangers were men of mental culture and good intelligence. Rose very soon made this discovery; and a new delight was opened to her in listening to conversations in which she was too retiring to join, and in drinking in new knowledge respecting that distant country which she knew to be her father's birth-land.

To tell the truth, it was a new and somewhat dangerous position in which Rose Vincent was placed—dangerous, we mean, to her future peace of mind and her naturally lively and susceptible imagination. Like the Miranda of "The Tempest," who, save in the person of her own father, had never seen a fair specimen of nature's manhood till the shipwrecked Ferdinand broke in upon her astonished sight, so Rose, brought up from infancy in the heart of a Canadian forest, and cut off from almost all intercourse with and knowledge of the

world of civilization and politeness, was dazzled and bewildered, while pleased, with the combined brilliancy, vigour, and gentle courtesy of the adventurous knights (knights-bachelors, too) who had thus invaded her father's domains.

Do not mistake Rose Vincent, however. She was no simpleton, ready to "fall in love" with the first "proper man" that came in her way. She was not prepared to say, with Miranda—

"There's nothing ill can dwell in such a temple:
If the ill-spirit have so fair a house,
Good things will strive to dwell with't."

She could enjoy the intellectual converse and lively repartees and exuberant spirits of her father's guests, and yet remain heart-whole. Depend upon it, fair reader, there is no immediate danger of this sort for Rose. Perhaps, as "in the multitude of counsellors there is safety," so in the multitude of objects of attraction there is safety also. We cannot say how this may be: we only expressly state that the good sense and religious principles of our heroine (we have found a heroine for our story at last) preserved her from the folly at which we have hinted.

Nevertheless, there *was* danger; the more so that Rose did not suspect it and was not forearmed against it. The fascinations of educational polish, combined with the manliness and ardour of youthful enterprise, gave a charm to this new society. Moreover, she was grateful to the young adventurers for the relief they had brought to her father's wounded spirits. There was a charm, too, in the uncertainties and perils into which they were about to venture. She shrank and shuddered within herself when she thought of these perils, and pictured one fearful scene after another, as the probable if not certain accompaniment or termination of the expedition on which they were bound; while—strange contradiction!—she half wished that she were a man, to share in these hazards. The danger, then, to which Rose Vincent was exposed was simply that of having her mind unsettled from the dull realities and common duties of her position, and her imagination unhealthily stimulated by the memory of these fleeting moments of enjoyment.

If Rose and her father were pleased with their guests, the guests were no less pleased with their hosts. Nothing loth, they closed with an invitation to remain several days at the settlement, employing or amusing themselves during the day in excursions in the surrounding forests, or in boating on the adjacent river, meeting at night around Mr. Vincent's hospitable board. On one of these occasions, while Rose was listening eagerly to one of the guests (a remarkably tall and handsome young Englishman), who was describing some curious old ruins in his native country, with which he was evidently familiar, her attention was recalled to her father, whose countenance had become pallid, as from the effects of a painful spasm, and who, after a momentary hesitation, suddenly rose and left the table.

The indisposition of the host was so obvious that the previous conversation instantly ceased, and Rose, declining the offers of more than one of the guests to render any assistance in their power, followed her father to his own room, whither he had retired. She found him considerably agitated, and pacing the room with unequal steps. She sprang directly to his side.

"Father! dear father! what is this?"

The question was met by a deep, sorrowful groan.

"You are ill. My dear father!"

"No, no; there is nothing serious, my girl. A sudden pain, nothing more. I shall soon be better," he said, with an evident effort which belied his pretences. "Leave me, Rose: I will presently return to the people

below. They will think it strange for us both to leave them thus."

"They will not mind: they saw why I left them. I cannot leave you while you are suffering. Only tell me what I can do for you, father."

"Nothing, nothing. See, I am well again now; and if I were not, the malady lies too deep for your medicines to touch. But, tell me, when are those people going?"

"Do you mean from the room?"

"From the room—the room! No; when are they going away, quite away?"

"My dear father!"

"It is a simple question, Rose. Cannot you answer me?" demanded Mr. Vincent, rather testily.

"I was only wondering. Do you not remember that they had fixed to leave us to-morrow, but that you urged them to remain two days longer?" said Rose, more and more concerned for her father, whose bodily suffering must be severe, she thought, thus to unsettle his mind.

"Did I? The more fool I, then, my dear; but, as it is, we must put up with them, I suppose. By the way, what is the name of that talkative young fellow to whom you were listening so intently just now?"

"Do you mean Mr. Rivers, father?"

"Is his name Rivers? Well, my love, I—I somehow—I think you listen too much to that young man, Rose."

"Father!"

"There's no harm in it, my darling."

"I am sure there is no harm in it, father," said Rose, quietly and distinctly.

"No, there is no harm in it, my dear," echoed Mr. Vincent, dreamily; "and now, Rose, suppose you return to our visitors. I am better now; and they will think a hundred odd things of us for leaving them so strangely."

"They know I am with you, and that you are ill; so they will not think it strange," said Rose.

"But I tell you I am not ill. There—I am quite myself again now." And Mr. Vincent made a strong effort to appear at his ease. It failed, however, and he added, "Go, Rose; make any apology you please. Excuse me as best you can, and say that I am unable to see them again this evening. I want to be alone, my girl," he added, impatiently.

"And can I do nothing for you, dear?" said Rose, as she yet lingered by her father's side, and looked up confidently as well as inquiringly into his face.

"Nothing, Rose, nothing. You drive me wild with you—I don't mean that, either; but leave me now, there's a good girl."

So Rose returned to the visitors, and apologized for her father's continued absence, on the ground of indisposition; and the party soon separated. But, long after the guests had retired to rest, Rose remained below, thinking sadly of her father and herself, and listening to his steps as with increasing tread he paced his chamber overhead to and fro, to and fro.

On the following morning, however, Mr. Vincent met his guests as usual, returned their greetings courteously, and accepted their condolences gratefully. Nothing particular transpired on that day nor on the next; and on the following morning the party of explorers left the settlement. There was one of them who lingered behind the rest, as though loth to depart; and—

"You will think of us poor wanderers sometimes, Miss Vincent," he said, kindly, as her little hand rested for a moment in the honest grasp of his broad palm.

"Surely, Mr. Rivers," she replied: "we have so few friends that"—and then, perhaps remembering her father's caution, she left the remainder of the sentence unspoken.

"If we should ever meet again, Miss Vincent, I shall hope to be numbered among that happy few: till then——"

And then the farewell was spoken, and the forester strode quickly after his companions. For a time Rose stood and watched the group as they walked over the clearing. At length she saw them enter the wide forest; and then she turned to her father, took his offered arm, and with him walked slowly back to the house.

CONG, AND ITS ENCHANTED CAVERN.

"I did not know that you had ever been in China," said a young lady, with charming *naïveté*, on hearing me mention the above-written name. What association with Hong-Kong thus blinded her to the geography of her native land she could best herself explain.

But it is a fact that many tourists boast of having seen all the beauties of the Emerald Isle, including Killarney's exquisite lakes, the mountain-glories of Wicklow, the giant-shores of Antrim, who have yet never caught even a passing glimpse of the wild and lovely magnificence of Connemara, except, perhaps, through the faulty medium of a copper-plate. They are content to reckon among their Irish treasures a fragment from the marble mountains of Galway, or a rag rent from the trees around a "blessed well," or, perchance, a pearl from the torrent-rivers of this western province; but were you to ask, "Have you been to Connemara?" or, "Where is Joyce's country?" you would discover a strange list of misconceptions in their minds—confused ideas of barren wildernesses and lovely heaths, dwelt upon by a few semi-barbarous beings; curiosities in their way, as being of the missing species between men and gorillas, and therefore courting Professor Huxley's acquaintance, but so closely allied to the latter that, except for their abundant powers of speech, their position in creation's scale would at mere first sight be doubtful.

Yet Connemara is no region of wastes, nor are the dwellers of its soil savages. The country rivals in beauty, and exceeds in grandeur, the most famous scenery of Ireland. Corrib's waters, and Corrib's islands, can never be erased from the recollection of him who has once beheld them. Afloat on the bosom of that lovely lake, the poetical mind receives impressions of the deepest delight, and stores up within it the richest imagery. No gloom of Glendalough is here. My memories of Lake Corrib are of a scene glowing under sunlight; golden rays gleaming along its purple level, broken by emerald islets, which show like gems set in enamel, to compare the greater with the less.

I was staying in the quiet village of Oughterard, which sits sentinel on the margin of the lake, when I received an invitation from one of the neighbouring gentry to accompany his party on an excursion to the farther shore. I was promised great things: I was told that, however fastidious the sight-seer, this expedition on which we were going never failed to delight him; and I am bound to say that the promise was not merely "whispered to the ear and broken to the hope."

According to previous agreement, my hostess (herself one of the aborigines of the land, and her *ménage* to suit) aroused me in the morning betimes. "Wouldn't you be afther gettin' up, avourneen, an' it on the stroke o' six?"

These prosaic words woke me from a galaxy of dreams. I had been hearing some of the wild legends of the district, and thereupon was woven the fanciful tissue of my sleep. I beheld limpid streams, with

mermaids afloat upon them: no, not mermaids, but veritable mortal maidens, transformed now into samples of the finny tribe by some fairy touch, and anon changing back again into the graceful shape of woman. Perchance one cause of this colouring of my dreams was the ceaseless murmur of a waterfall close to the cottage where I was staying—a rather romantic abode, dwelling in the perpetual music of the cascade; damp, by consequence. Ivy wrapped the low walls almost entirely; the tall trees around were the haunt of innumerable warblers, while in their summits lived a grave colony of crows; and from the nearest copse issued the gentle and plaintive “Coo coo; coo coo,” as if beating time for the choristers of the woodland.

Thus it was on that glorious summer day. Earth and sky were at their loveliest, as though there never could be a cloud or a care on the horizon again. Blessed the heart which lies open to Nature's influences, and can be tinged by her sunshine: it will never want for a holiday.

“Ah, thin, acushla! but yer welcome to ould Outherrard; an' I'm proud to say the day's jist the one plasin' to yer honour!” As if the weather had been ordered express, and paid for. These were my landlady's parting words, as I swung back her little green gate, and turned out on the public road; reaching my friend's mansion just in time to see sundry hampers dismissed to the pier at the end of the demesne, whence all the freight—human as well as provision-al—was to take shipment on Lough Corrib. A short drive through the grounds brought us to the same spot, where a pretty yacht lay at moorings. And presently she spreads her white sails, amid cries of “Lower yer heads, ladies, av ye plase! gintlemin, mind yer hats!” and much grief to those who neglected the precaution. So we glide away under broad canvas.

Looking towards the receding shore, the prominent object of the foreground is the mansion we have just left: a solitary warder, it sits on guard, at the foot of the solitary hills; an ancient structure. I can see that its owner gazes with pride upon his ancestral home among lands transmitted by a long line of forefathers. On the right the village of Oughterrard is just visible, with its twin public buildings, the church and pretty courthouse. What is that chime of silver-sounding bells? They might be in Italy from the same source, a convent-roof, summoning the faithful to prayer. I can also hear the murmur of my cascade even here. But look to the left! The land seems opening apart as we proceed. Mountain is piled upon mountain in glorious profusion of grandeur, tier above tier, chain behind chain, till the farthest outlines might be shadowings of clouds, so lightly are they pencilled against the serene sky.

“Only the beginning of the mountain ranges!” I am told. Everybody levels information at me. Even the “captain” of our craft turns about his good-natured face to exclaim, decisively, “Sure, yer honour, thim mountains there forenint ye haven't any ind at all at all!” After which no one has any more to say as to the extent of the ranges: the last assertion swallowed up all the others.

I questioned the friendly skipper respecting various matters thenceforth. He told me the names and histories of islands.

“That spot to yer left, wid the beautiful white tower on top of it, Misther D— lives there; an' sure no one can deny but he has a dacent view to look at every day he rises; an' he needn't be over-lonesome, whin the staymer passes his door quite convanient.”

“A Selkirk on a Juan Fernandez,” thought I; and I would not have been beyond measure astonished to

behold a dusky “man Friday” emerge from the brushwood on the little beach. But Mr. D— wisely does not forswear the sweets of society to such extent. The civilization of his island waved the whitest of pocket-handkerchiefs, and shouted the most cordial of welcomes to the stranger, as we glided by, wishing us good speed on our way to Cong.

What innumerable islands! How draped from head to foot in copse and fern! Each has its peculiar name, which must take an elastic memory and considerable practice to keep tacked always to its own bit of *terra firma*. “Rabbit Island,” “Bilberry Island,” and the like, mark characteristics general enough for a score of such. As for the names given me in Irish, of course I never thought of remembering them, even had the utterance been possible to my unpractised tongue.

I was lying in a state of extreme happiness, dreamily gazing on the wondrous beauty of those Protean mountains—for every few moments some new gorge opened in their purple hearts, or some new peak hove in sight, serrating the edge of the heavens—when I was roused by the inquiry—

“Wouldn't yer honour care to see the berrin'-place of St. Patrick's own son?”

I had hitherto been quite unaware of the existence of any such person, but was not unwilling to behold his tomb, for the sake of his relationship.

It was on the island of Inchaguile. We landed, and saw the remains of a small church, the very building which the distinguished antiquary Dr. Petrie has taken for an illustration in his “Round Towers of Ireland.” We must regret that little care seems exercised to preserve the interesting ruin, the tomb in which is pronounced by the same competent authority to be that of “a contemporary of the Irish apostle, and not improbably even that of his nephew.”

Leaving this relic of the ages behind us, we soon arrived at our landing-place at Ashford, once the seat of Lord Oranmore, but now one of the many residences of that liberal-hearted Irishman Benjamin Guinness. Money has done much here; has smoothed pastures and laid out labyrinths of shrubbery, which last were the especial delight of a botany-loving lady to whom I had the honour of becoming chaperon. Not a tree nor a flower escaped the universality of her knowledge; and, being a novice in plant Latinity myself, I felt rather small, and endeavoured to change the conversation to safer ground. What thought my fair companion of the geological features of the surrounding scenery? But speedily I discovered that here also she was perfectly at home—could discourse with accuracy as to the various stratified and igneous rocks, and their representatives then present. Another lady joining us could speak of nothing but water-colours, and lamented over her brushes and palette inaccessible, at the existing juncture. Both exulted over something “grandiflora,” which the one wanted to dry for an herbarium, the other to copy as an artist; and, for better safe keeping of the prize, it was conferred upon me, and duly adorned my button-hole.

Our stroll was delightful; and, what with charming smiles and charming scenes, I had nigh forgotten the object of our walk, until I saw the foremost of our party come to a stand while endeavouring to force egress through a fence (for the walls in these regions are only loose layers of stones); and the ground beyond was in nowise attractive—apparently a field of indifferent green.

At the imminent risk of being imbedded in a stony grave, I helped my botanical companion through a small aperture in the aforesaid wall, and then began to wonder

what we had come hither to see. Perhaps it was an advantageous point of view; but nothing appeared. "Have patience," said my fair charge. "Would you just break me off that bit of rock? It is an excellent specimen of"—something unknown; and, being furnished with a hammer, I blindly obeyed.

When I turned round, where was the company in advance? The field was bare, as when first upheaved from the Flood. Had they sunk in the earth, or vanished in air? My guide smiled at the inquiry latent in my eyes. What! a chasm in the heart of the earth! Had they fallen through? I gazed downwards, and surely there was the feathered hat of one victim visible!

"The cave of Cong!" But how to get down into it: there was the rub. The opening resembled the shaft of a mine; its sides were completely draped with ivy and other creeping plants, as far as the eye could penetrate the gloom; and gradually one came to perceive a sort of rude stairs or ladder leading to the Plutonic regions below, whence came a sound of gurgling and rushing waters, unpleasantly suggestive of what one might meet at the bottom. My dream flashed across me as my companion prepared to descend: I hoped devoutly she was not about to enact Naiad on our hands.

Presently the face of a woman emerged from the indistinctness, and beckoned us downwards. Whither a lady undauntedly led the way, it was not for me to hold back; so I plucked up heart of grace, and put my foot on the first narrow step. The scene was curious during descent. The blue sky roofed the shaft, and against it stood out every ivy-leaf on the marge. Our balustrades were projecting tufts of shrub and fragments of rock, aided by which we soon joined our friends in the depths of the abyss.

Instantaneously burst upon us a blinding light! Above, below, around, the whole cave seemed on fire: the rocks glowed as if olden geologic times were back again, and the elements molten with fervent heat. The scene was so awfully grand as to baffle all attempt at accurate description. Flowing onwards, like liquid flame, was the river, whose deep gurgling I had heard above-ground; through arch after arch of its subterranean road it swept on into darkness; and at the limit of view stood a weird figure on a huge fragment of rock, waving in its bony arms masses of burning material, which were momentarily flung into the stream.

All this illumination was produced by the very simple means of burning trusses of straw. But now, where is the sole inhabitant of the cave—the enchanted trout, reputed once to have borne the fairest form of fair maiden? It was visible presently, swimming about in the lighted place with great composure, altogether heedless of human presence and curious eyes. Other fish has never been seen in these waters, and a legend has accordingly adhered to this solitary specimen.

The wizened old dame who superintended the illumination aforesaid was at my elbow. "Ye needn't doubt, yer honour: it's a raal thrue trout, an' no mistake."

"Yes," I said, "that's plain enough; but was it ever anything else?" I desired to draw the tale from such unsophisticated lips.

"Och, thin, sure it was: a finer lady never brathed the breath o' life than herself once of a time. But whin the man she loved thrated her badly, she took the form of a fish to revinge herself; an' he thried all the spells an' the charrums in Ireland on her, but it wouldn't do. At last, whin he was in a rage, he put her on the griddle to fry, an' throth she thransformed herself quick enough then; but he ran off in a fright when he see how sudden intirely she did it. An' she came away here, an'

became a trout agin, to spite him; an' here she's swimmin' about ever since, more by token."

Certain it is, that the solitary fish is continually at this opening in the underground progress of the river Mask, visible to all beholders in the Cave of Cong.

To return to fact from fiction: the shaft through which we descended is at least a hundred feet deep, with a diameter of fourteen or sixteen. It is the only point at which the stream connecting Lakes Mask and Corrib, during a considerable subterranean course, receives the light of day.

Once more in the broad sunshine, we thought of dinner, and enjoyed it as those who had done deserving work. While reducing the fair proportions of ham and chicken, we criticised the *coup d'œil* of the illuminated cave. The ladies had one and all thought of Macbeth and his witches, and I firmly believe were infinitely more comfortable above-ground than below.

But my dream was not without a fulfilment ere our day was ended. Stepping from one boat into another, a lady for whose safety I was responsible overbalanced herself, and received an involuntary cold bath; whereupon I made matters worse by assuring the dripping fair that salt water never gave cold, quite forgetting that the sea-like horizon of Corrib was that of a freshwater lake. After this I abstained from all attempts at consolation. By the kindness of some cottagers, redress was obtained (will the reader pardon the pun?).

Evening sunbeams were gilding the ancient tower of Ochnanure—a fine ruin, descended from the ancestors of my host—when we again touched the pier of Lemonfield; and as we drove to the house I could not help expressing a wish that the beauties of Western Ireland were better known, and, as a consequence, oftener visited by those tourists who make the wealth of lovely lands. Sure I am that the reader who may be induced to follow in the steps of the writer will be abundantly rewarded by such a day on Lough Corrib and in the Enchanted Cave of Cong.

TEN DAYS IN BISCAY AND NAVARRE.

I.

Is Biscay Spain, or is it Biscay only? This is a question I revolved while passing through the delicious backwoods on the heights between Ezpeitia and Tolosa. It is not easy to solve. The Basque race are not Spanish; yet, in their houses, manufactures, etc., they are assimilated, apparently, to the Spaniards. I see a vast difference between Basques on this side of the Pyrenees and on the French side: darker in complexion, wearing a different dress and eating a different diet, as far as one can judge by the bread, at least. But what the real and important differences and resemblances are between French and Spanish Basques a cursory observation in a hasty trip of a week or so cannot enable one to judge fairly. It is said that the Basques were converted to Christianity (or what is called so by courtesy) later than any other European people—not until between three hundred or four hundred years ago. They are still so far independent that they will not pay taxes to Government, but raise a subsidy yearly and voluntarily, which is accepted in lieu of taxes; yet, with this independence of character, and great pride in their race, they do not seem to have much fellow-feeling for their brethren on the other side of the mountains, and neither meet with them nor have anything in common except language. Both French and Spanish Basques bear a high character in several respects. They are far superior, from all I hear, and judging from physiognomy, to the Bearnese.



AMONG BASQUE CHILDREN.

It was on a Wednesday morning when we went over the small town of San Sebastian, and saw what little there is to be seen there: a beautiful view of sea and rounded cliffs, not unlike Howth Head, and a fine sweep of sandy beach; a cheerful market-place, where I stood and sketched two or three old women with long tails and orange handkerchiefs; and a church, where a confirmation was going on, which gave us an opportunity of seeing a number of the people of the city—ladies in mantillas, to our hearts' content. Many of them had a look which made me see they came from real Spain: slight, graceful figures; splendid, glossy black hair, really like a raven's wing, and exquisitely arranged, with the light net fall of the mantilla down over it, and hanging over the face; bright eyes, and a general effective look, making them seem prettier than, when studied, they really were, though many were in fact exceedingly handsome. The lower order, with long plaits hanging down their backs,



were a very good-looking race, and with a most agreeable, intelligent expression—not so dark as these jetty-stained ladies, but quite brunette, for the most part. A few charming *blondes* with auburn hair I saw, but the orange handkerchiefs do not become them so well. At eleven o'clock we left San Sebastian, and a pleasant drive of two or three hours brought us to a little village, where the horses baited.

Here we spent two hours, and this was the way we employed them:—We walked down to the beach (for it is on the coast), where bold rocks stood out against the broad Atlantic, whose waves, now small and gentle, yet came with a rolling dash up on the smooth sands, giving promise of what they would do when lashed into rage. Then we sat down to eat bread and cold chicken, and to be watched by a whole bevy of handsome, barefooted children, seeming just out of school, some carrying babies, and altogether making a party of twelve or fourteen at least, full of curiosity to see the strangers; for I suppose English, or indeed any travellers, are not very common. At first we felt it a little troublesome to be so surrounded; but we soon found that these Basque children were so well-mannered and nicely behaved that they did not worry us. They asked for nothing, and only sat as near as we permitted, watching our proceedings, and, on receiving bread and bits of biscuit, divided them without roughness and scrambling. They chattered in Basque to each other; but all understood Spanish except the very little ones. Some of the girls of ten and twelve were lovely little creatures, with a sweet, intelligent black eye and lissom figure. I began a sketch of some of the party (to get all into a group would have required longer time than I had to give); but a dear little black-eyed damsel, with a baby brother in the usual swaddling-clothes of this region (*i.e.*, a yellow cloth skirt and a heap of promiscuous jackets bound together with red or brown festooned ribbons) sat opposite me, and, with three or four more boys with blue and

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PASS IN THE PYRENEES ABOVE EZPEITIA.

red berrets, and little girls in charming variety of striped and coloured garments, made a pleasant picture, and gave great delight. They screamed with joy at recognising each other, eagerly pointing and naming the faces—one, Martino, especially, who was, I suppose, a special favourite. One big lad of thirteen or so was sent to fetch some water for us to drink, and showed much intelligence and most courteous manners. He was not so well-looking as the rest, but had a good wide forehead and honest expression, so that I thought I would risk some hymns for him, though a tract I was rather afraid of, as he still went to school, and was of course under the priests. But, after ascertaining that he could read (Spanish, of course), I began, in the best Spanish I could master, to tell him I had got a "canto" here which was very good and nice, and I would give it him. So I gave one to him, and one to a girl who seemed anxious to get it. The pleasure of receiving anything was such that it little mattered what; at any rate, the boy kissed the paper with gratitude, and said a verse aloud to me, at my request. I then said, as I was walking along the sands with him, "You see, it is said here, 'Jesus is my Friend,

my King,'"—pointing to all the titles given in the hymn—"so Jesus is *all*; it is necessary to believe in him for all: nothing else; he is all." My Spanish would not go much further than this very humble attempt at instruction. Some of the girls laughed at the boy as he read the verse, but more at the novelty and oddity of the whole thing than from impertinence. I never saw better-mannered poor children. How I did long to have them all in a really Christian school, and a good teacher over them! Those bright eyes showed such intelligence: is it all to be wasted? God grant that a Biscayan missionary may yet come to these hills, and gather a sheaf for the Lord of the vineyard!

We had a rather windy drive in the afternoon, which made the clouds hang over the mountains, so that they did not look their best; but it was a fine and varied scene, and Ezpeitia perfectly lovely. It was yet daylight when we reached that little town, famous as the birthplace of Loyola, and possessing a college, where those great mischief-mongers his followers have a head-quarters.

The town of Ezpeitia is hardly more than a village, but old and very picturesque. It stands in a wide valley

of rich meadows, with a rapid trout-stream running over stones and rocks in the midst of it, and a whole circle of mountains of various heights round it, some bare, and showing thin gray limestone unclad, others broken by cultivation, and clumps of foliage, cork-trees, oak and beech. The hotel, *alias fonda, alias parador*—the last is the favourite term here—astonished me by its cleanliness, compared to what we had been told of Spanish inns. Some friends had told us that the inns in Biscay were dirty, the food very bad, and the people uncivil. Our short experiences were exactly contrary. The inn at Ezpeitia was very decent, as well as delightfully picturesque: the *salon* windows opened on little balconies embowered in apricot-trees trained over them, and covered with green fruit; dark polished floors were here, somewhat uneven; and there was a Rembrandt-like kitchen, where a benevolent-looking old dame, with a white kerchief on her head, presided over the cookery, which, when served up, proved remarkably good.

Early next morning I was at the window, looking out at the pleasant scene, and enjoying a quiet bit of time before my companion was awake. When dressed, I went to make some tea, as chocolate does not suit all our party, and coffee is bad in this region. I scrambled on by dint of making the most of what little I knew; and the pretty maid who waited at dinner complimented me by saying, "*that lady learned very quickly*" (we had been asking her the name of different things). The proper Spanish breakfast is a tiny cup of chocolate, without a saucer, a couple of small sweet cakes or a morsel of bread, a large glass of water, and a *sugarilla*, or thing of sugar, and white of egg, to put in the water. The people were all exceedingly courteous and civil, and far from being affronted at my making the tea and standing in the kitchen to see that the water boiled. In fact, we found them very courteous indeed. I have never met pleasanter manners than those of Spanish Basques. Afterwards we set out for the Jesuit college and church, which is the sight of Ezpeitia, and very beautifully situated about a mile from the town, and well worth sketching, from its graceful Saracenic style. However, I preferred making my drawing at a point some distance from the building, and letting the rest of the party go on to visit the interior, which I did not much care to see, these popish dens being pretty much alike inside. While I was drawing, a venerable-looking poor man passed by, and stepped back to glance at my picture. So of course I had a little bit of chat, as far as I could manage, and gave him an "*espera*." At first he would not take it; and I was just feeling so disappointed, but eyed him a little, and then it came out he refused, thinking it was the only Spanish book I had, and that I would want it to learn Spanish. "*Toma, señor*," said I, earnestly; and he thanked me, and took it and went on his way.

Leaving Ezpeitia (which we did about one o'clock, after an early lunch), we ascended a mountain, so steep that two stout oxen were harnessed to the carriage in front of the horses. It was a mountain pass, in fact, on the Spanish side of the Pyrenees, and a very beautiful one in many ways. The foliage was exceedingly fine and luxuriant; such groves of beech in all the splendour of their early summer green, and with pretty merino sheep feeding under them, and gray rocks jutting out amid heath, and fern, and grass, adorned with tufts of blue columbines, and a pretty pink blossom which I do not know. The cottages of the Biscayan peasantry were an unceasing object of admiration, being of picturesque forms, and white or buff-coloured, with red-tiled roofs and little wooden balconies with vines trained over them,

and just the happy mixture of neatness and neglect that comes best into a landscape; on the whole, far superior to the French. The farming, too, was pronounced better by those of our party competent to judge: certainly the land between the rocks and ravines seemed very fertile, and most carefully laboured, if in somewhat primitive style. The men, driving a simple plough, or working up the land with great forks, were usually attended and aided by their little boys; and women, with white sleeves and blue skirts, tucked up so as to show a red petticoat, were busy weeding. The oxen here are much finer and larger than the Bearnese: they are shod with iron, like horses. The carts are very primitive, having solid wheels, which must be very heavy, and make a great creaking: the effect is odd, used as we are to spokes in wheels.

By half-past six we reached Tolosa, our next halt; a very pretty town, but not in such scenery as Ezpeitia. A brisk river runs through it, which is turned to account for two manufactories—one of cloth from the merino wool, the other paper. This is a great thing for so small a place, and improves it much, by giving employment. Between Tolosa and Pampelona is no town—nothing but miserable villages, where no one would sleep unless in very sore necessity.

At an early hour all were up and the carriage ready. The morning was brilliant, and the little river sparkled as we crossed the bridge. A real mountain pass, equal to most of the Swiss passes, only without the snow-peaks, was now our route. In higher latitudes it must have been snowy: here it is in winter cold enough for snow, but not so late as this; indeed, the sun was exceedingly hot, but a breeze, which in some of the ravines became a wind, prevented it being at all oppressive. I could have dispensed with the wind, as it blew up dust, and took off one's hat often; however, when sheltered under the rocks, the air was delightfully keen, and yet pure and light.

A small village, within the borders of Navarre, and situated between two splendid passes, is the usual and only rest between Ezpeitia and Tolosa. A house where a toll had to be paid marked the boundary, and a huge chain hung before it, which we were told was put up at night just across the road. This chain marks the line between Biscay and Navarre. On the Biscay side no man can be taken by conscription for a soldier, for the Basques will not submit to this. They often enlist voluntarily, and make good soldiers, and rise, in many cases, to great honours. Several generals of note have been Basques; but force they will not stand. The difference in the country was not great in this part of Navarre. The few people we saw were much less dark than the Spanish Basques, and not so well-looking. The road has so much traffic with merchandise for San Sebastian, that a *posada* with plenty of stabling and food (though not what we could call good accommodation) is found there. It was a real Spanish *posada*—the ground-floor all occupied by stables full of newly arrived mules and horses, and pigs running about on it. Through this we had to pick our steps to a staircase not of the cleanest, and came to a picturesque kitchen, where huge logs lay on the floor endways to the fire, above which swung a pot. Everything was in primitive style. In a room opposite a number of muleteers and carters were eating and talking. Up another flight of dirty stairs, we reached the grand guest-chamber, which, if not clean, was not actually filthy, and so bare of furniture as not to be fusty. The windows, as in all the common houses in Navarre, were mostly of wood: in the cottages nothing but wooden shutters are used, with a peep-hole for cold

days. They brought us some odd kind of broth with bread boiled in it, which is not bad; then a plate of *garbanzos*; and then some lamb roasted in pieces as big as one's hand, and very good, in spite of a *soupeon* of garlic. The Spanish cooking is certainly maligned, at least in the north. We got good fare everywhere; and this was a mere *posada*, frequented almost exclusively by natives. Excellent bread, and good wine with a rather pleasant astringency, were liberally supplied.

While the horses were putting to, I went down among the carters, and managed to catch two by themselves, to whom I gave a tract, which was accepted willingly; and, after we had started, the one who had taken it was observed reading so attentively that his oxen had actually come to a dead stop. I have not dared to give tracts in a large circle, for fear of mischief. The road now lay through another pass, celebrated as the scene of much guerrilla warfare, and, I suspect, of sundry robber exploits also. Baptiste, our *cocher*, told many robber tales to raise our spirits; but the patrol is pretty watchful, and by day there is no danger; only at night these passes are not safe unless you have a guard. I do not learn that the Spanish robbers are so ingeniously cruel as the Italians, nor do they seem to carry people away to their caves and hiding-places. We saw some caves which would be first-rate haunts for concealment. One part of this pass is called the Two Sisters (*Dos Hermanas*), being the name of two magnificent rocks of different sizes, which stand sentinels on each side of the road. Green slopes surround them, with short brushwood, and a stream flows beneath, where there is a little establishment of iron-works, which does not injure the scene. Here we got down and sat a short time to draw, though not nearly long enough, but as long as was prudent; for, as it was, we barely reached Pampelona by daylight.

After the *Dos Hermanas* the mountains gradually lowered, and at length we came to a district much inferior both in beauty and fertility. The villages were still pretty, but the land was monotonous and poor-looking. Pampelona stands well, however, with a range of low hills gradually rising in the distance; and its fine fortifications and beautiful citadel-towers, one above another, and the old Spanish houses with their numerous windows and varied shades of buff and pinkish walls, are all worth seeing. Though a small town for one of such importance, it is well-built and compact, and clean, as far as we could see, after having walked over a great part. The weather, though still dry, was, however, not so favourable. A strong south wind was blowing, and the clouds of fine dust were quite a nuisance. Yet it was neither oppressively hot nor cold, only disagreeable from the bluster and dust, and a slight languid feeling it is apt to give. We managed to see a great deal in spite of it, and had no reason to complain.

It was late on the Friday evening that we arrived at Pampelona, and nothing could be done that night, except to scrape up our Spanish words, in order to get what the weary "outer man" needed in various ways; for though I do think the Spanish inns, at least in Biscay and Navarre, have been maligned, still, if any one expects, on arriving at this, the capital of the province, to find, in the best inns' best rooms, ewers, and towels, and water, and tumblers, and so on, he will be disappointed. Clean beds, on iron stands, were a great point, and the stone floor was covered with a matting, which hid the dust nicely; only the maid had forgotten to sweep under it the former occupants' half-burnt cigars! Little tripods answered to hold basins, and *agua fria* and *paño de mano* were soon added by Antonia or Dolores. It

sounded rather like a story than reality to hear these graceful names shouted about.

On Saturday we "did" Pampelona pretty completely. First, we walked about the streets, staring, like savages just come to a civilized country, at the queer little shops and the ladies with their graceful mantillas. I have not seen one bonnet here, and our hats are stared at as novelties by all the lower orders. I do not see so many really handsome faces as in San Sebastian; but all are graceful, and, with coloured shawls under the mantillas, look perfect pictures; some, in deep crimson, scarlet, or maize-coloured silk, and cashmere shawls, black dresses, and mantillas, look very nice. If the shawl be an innovation, it is an improvement. An old gentleman, called Don — (uncle to some ladies one of our party had met, and who knew her by report), has been exceedingly civil to us all. He was an old political exile, and for years resided in England and gave lessons. Now he is again in his own town and rank, and possesses some considerable property, and, belonging to one of the old Navarre families, is much thought of. He took us over the cathedral, of which the cloisters are very fine and old, and showed us every antiquity that could be seen, till I own my feet ached with standing. In the cathedral, mass going on, the Don only gave a bow in passing, and then took us to an inner part, where we sat on beautiful carved wooden seats and listened to some very singular, though fine music. It was so rapid: I never heard sacred music so quick.

In the afternoon our coachman procured me a *sitter*. A number of men, from a fertile district called Villafranca, who wear a peculiar dress, had come up to the conscription here, and the streets swarmed with them. When my wish was made known of taking a likeness, not one, but half a dozen, claimed the honour, and pressed into the room eagerly. I could only take three, and had to work very hard to get them done before patience was exhausted.

MEN I HAVE KNOWN.

SIR JAMES C. ROSS.

THE deep interest I felt in the arctic expeditions has been evidenced in the several reminiscences* I have devoted to their eminent commanders, two of whom, Franklin and Crozier, perished in the cause, leaving me to mourn the loss of friends I valued sincerely, and from whom I had parted, at the outset of their voyages, when they were full of energy and hope. They feared no "thick-ribbed ice:" it was all sunshine in their horizon of the morning, and they looked to a calm and bright evening of life, when they should be happily restored to their homes, to enjoy every private endearment and public honour, made only more delightful by the dangers through which they had passed. *Eheu! Deo aliter visum*. But their names live in the pages of history, and in a higher record, for they were good as well as brave men.

With James Clark Ross I had the good fortune to enjoy a longer and more intimate friendship than with any other of his gallant associates. I saw him sail on all his perilous adventures, and I witnessed and welcomed his auspicious returns, crowned with results of the deepest interest to the intellectual world. He had been where never prow of ship had ploughed the sea or dared the iceberg before; he had devised access to the

* Leisure Hour, Nos. 479 and 543.

unfathomable caves of ocean; he had enlightened almost every material science by practical experiment and important exploration; and geography, navigation, magnetism, natural history, meteorology, all received illustration from his devoted labours. In his sphere he was as distinguished a benefactor to humanity as the widely extended compass of his duties rendered possible, the pattern of a naval officer and the model of a social man. Highly as I admired and esteemed his compeers in these great enterprises, I could not but regard him as "the noblest Roman of them all."

In early boyhood he entered the Royal Navy, and, considering the limited nature of his opportunities, must have been gifted with rare talents to master those acquirements which marked him as no ordinary character before he was twenty years of age, and accumulated so perpetually as to render him extraordinary and famous to the close of his well-spent life. The result is not the less memorable, inasmuch as he was brought up, not educated, under the command of his uncle Sir John Ross, also of North Polar celebrity, and who had acted bravely in the service, but who was not the most likely person to direct junior footsteps in the paths that lead to distinction through the arduous toils of mental cultivation. *Requiescat in pace.* By his own resolute perseverance the young James Ross advanced far into the intricate regions of science, and was taught, like his illustrious friend General Edward Sabine, to solve those problems which are throwing so wonderful a light upon the motive elements of our globe and the true condition of our earth and of the universe. The two were comrades in Sir John Franklin's voyage to the Arctic Seas in 1818-19, and I may safely state that their companionship was productive of much of the fruits which have since so greatly benefited the intellectual world. In magnetism alone the researches of these scientific brothers have developed laws on which all future experiments must rest, and the solution of all further problems be based. And what a place to start from. It was as if the finger of Providence had pointed it out. It was on one of his missions from the ship which reflected nearly all the value and honour upon the voyage that James Ross ascertained the great fact which was a main object of all their exertions. Guided by scientific skill, and insensible to the appalling fatigue and privations of the way, he conducted his gallant party to that point where they saw the needle deflected downwards right into the bosom of the earth. Playful as was the record mirthfully "sung out" on the occasion, it was sufficient to fix an immortal name on—

"Sir James Clark Ross, the first whose sole
Stood on the North Magnetic Pole!"

I am free to state that upon his energy, enterprise, and intelligence, his uncle, Sir John Ross, chiefly built the edifice of his own exaltation; but James Clark had enough and to spare for the use of relative, associate, or competitor. His voyages under the command of the kindred spirit, the gallant Sir Edward Parry, fully trained him for the separate responsibility he, in after-years, so largely undertook and so bravely answered. From first to last his conduct was truly noble. I shall not, however, do more than offer a few brief traits relating to these expeditions, seeing that their most important results have been laid before the world in the valuable volumes which have appeared from his pen.

It may be remarked of our intrepid polar explorers, that in all they have said in print and all they have been in the habit of saying, *vivâ voce*, when forced into conversation about their travel, they have been very remarkable for their manly, unassuming spirit. I have

never heard one of them hint at aught the least heroic in their wonderful exploits, nor even give a touch of pathos to the details of their desperate endurance of killing vicissitudes. It seemed always to be "orders obeyed," and "duty done," and that was the be-all and the end-all of their story. By chance, perhaps, some small anecdote might transpire, and serve as a key to innumerable hardships and privations. Thus I remember being out one day in Buckinghamshire, shooting with Ross and his friend and surgeon the estimable Mr. Beverley. In beating a copse we accidentally started a fox. A gun was up. "Ah, don't fire! there are few enough hereabouts for the hunt;" and so Reynard scampered unscathed away; and something like the following was elicited from the conversation of the two old messmates. They had been out from the ships longer than their provision lasted, and were ravenously hungry on their march to get back. There was no edible nor living creature to shoot, but luckily they found a dead fox, which, however, was only partially preserved by the ice from putridity. But fox-meat, though "high," served better than no meat; a fire was made, and one of the party, assuming to be the best cook, took upon himself the task of preparing dinner. The fumes rose gratefully to the nostrils of the two officers, and at last the roasted vermin was set before them. But oh, the Barmecide feast, or Sancho Panza dinner, whose savoury odours had so excited appetite! The extemporized cook of that day had neglected to remove the gall, and the dish was so bitter bad that even a hungry dog could not have eaten of it. It was a sore disappointment, but only one of a thousand to which our hardy sailors were exposed during these persevering attempts to explore the north-west passage and the frozen Arctic Seas. I almost fancied my companions were sorry not to take their revenge by a shot at the fox that was allowed to escape. But they were sportsmen enough to deny the impeachment.

The description of a more serious and perilous condition I gathered from snatches of conversation led by a few inquiries on my part. On the occasion referred to the ship got jammed into drifting ice—without power of motion or possibility of escape—and was borne hither and thither at the mercy of the treacherous element. They knew not where they might be driven—it seemed as if to some farther desolate, ice-locked bourne whence no traveller could hope to return, impervious to human effort, fatal to human existence. Every officer and man was sensible of this impending and apparently inevitable fate. Still, their calm bearing appeared as if it were a forestalling of the silence of the grave. On the meeting of every morning, when all eyes were turned to examine for signs of destruction or deliverance, not the slightest expression of despondency could be traced on a single countenance, nor a whisper of fear be heard from any lip. They looked on each other as if death could be read on every comrade's face, whilst the "taking note" of this awful presage was unaccompanied by any consciousness of their common danger. All was darkly portentous; but there was no despair—not even a passing evidence of apprehension of the destined result to which they seemed to be helplessly hurrying on. Fervent and pious were the prayers, but they were dumb. Sailors are said to be superstitious, and their lives, spent in watching indications and looking to events, may lead to this feeling; but a large number of sailors are also religious, truly religious. Their rescue from perils, their salvation from imminent destruction, their almost miraculous and constant preservation, teach them to believe in and rely upon that Providence that cares for

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their sustenance and safety. And above all, men who have been exposed to the privations and dangers of these severely trying services soon learn to know how little help they possess in themselves, and how entirely they are in the keeping of a Divine, omniscient, and omnipotent Power. Upon this they fix a reliance more sublime than can even be imagined by the thousands, however thoughtful, who pass their days hardly conscious of a risk, and can form no idea of that constant sense of impending fate which stirs up the depth and sincerity of providential faith and trust in the sailor's inmost soul.

In confirmation of these remarks I appeal to all who have read the narratives of the arctic exploring expeditions, if the true Christian tone of these books is not as strikingly conspicuous as the heroic performance of mere professional duties.

Such was the condition of that subdued circle, whose admirable bearing language could but poorly describe. What men could do they did; but their world of ice went driving on—whither? None could tell, but evidently to a miserable death. But the merciful Providence was with them there. Suddenly and unconsciously as they had been left in the inexorable ice, so suddenly and unconsciously were they relieved from their dreadful situation. Almost without a warning, the solid mass broke up, and split, and separated in every direction. There was a sea for the ship to move in; and no time was lost in the cutting away of every obstacle, and extricating her from her prison. Hope sprung up once more, and smiling visions of home replaced the dismal dream of death beyond the ken of humankind.

Before I bring to a close my recollections of my friend, I should notice, in connection with his public career, that, in his expedition in search of his old and loved comrade Franklin, he reached that point at which all (the all who perished in that fatal attempt) might have been saved. The time and place agreed, but, alas! it was otherwise ordained. Unhappily the wanderers took another line, towards the northern continent of America, and the mournful result we all now know. Had they directed their steps to where Ross was shaping his difficult course and exploring every accessible shore, there they would have found succour in abundance, and the means of a joyful return to their native land. The remembrance of this possibility often brought a pang of regret to the mind of their defeated deliverer. It was one of those painful ifs which, on looking back, poor mortals find often recurring to distress them. Oh, if some good angel could have whispered to Franklin and Crozier that their anxious old messmate was near enough to rescue them! Had they only been aware whither to turn, how happy would the meeting have been! But the knowledge was hidden; the if was a mere breathing of fond aspiration; the calamitous destiny of our lamented countrymen it was not in human hands to modify or avert.

The antarctic expedition of Ross and Crozier was full of new interest. Captain Cook had reached the latitude of 71° 5', and the undaunted Captain James Weddell,* in

the merchant service, had penetrated above two hundred miles farther south, 74° 15', in 1823-4; whilst for Ross it was reserved far and wide to explore still more southern fields of open sea and ice and unknown lands. Of Weddell's daring voyage, in the years 1822-3-4, he entertained a very high opinion, and in his own well-provided voyage, amid dangers even greater than in the arctic circle, learnt to appreciate the dangers of the ice and the true British sailor's spirit which had navigated these two pigmy boats through all the perils and terrors of that extraordinary navigation. How much more of that vast antarctic ocean the indefatigable efforts of Ross, and his perseverance to the last possible limit, revealed to the world, may be found in the able volume which he published on his return. It only remains for me here to note of it that, among other discoveries of a more valuable and useful kind, he discovered that the famous American, Commodore Wilkes, had made out land and attached to it the flag of the United States where no land existed. Having sailed over this pretended continent, Captain Ross took the trouble to expose the vain-glorious boaster, and he was publicly convicted of false pretensions and the assertion of absolute inventions.

Wilkes is said never to have forgiven this exposure, and his embittered feelings towards all Englishmen were evident even so long afterwards as in the insolent affair of the "Trent," in the present American internecine war. At first some excuse might have been offered for Wilkes, on the ground of an axiom I have heard Ross prefer for better purposes. There was some remark made that the Duke of Wellington was obstinate, and never would confess to an error. "And perfectly right, too," he observed: "it would never do for military or naval leaders to own to mistakes; when made, they must cover and remedy them as best they can; but to have those under command taught to impeach their judgment and to question their fitness would be to lose that confidence without which they never could accomplish any great design." But this leaves no excuse for the rancour which remained in Wilkes towards the countrymen of the man who had discovered and exposed his false claim as a discoverer.

Firm as the rock was Ross at sea. But I must now view him honoured by his sovereign, applauded by his country, and loved and esteemed by all who knew him. Well was he entitled to reward: nobly had he earned repose. The best and the last awaited him. After a short while I met him with cordial wishes. "I have embarked on my voyage of life," he said, and calm and bright was the prospect. He was a man of very strong affections, a warm and faithful friend, a devoted husband, and a fond father; and, as far as human vision could penetrate, the edifice of his bliss was built on solid foundations. She, the crown of his toils, had waited for her wandering sailor—dreading every accident to which he was exposed in his daring career—hoping high against every rumour of disaster, true as the needle to the pole, and constant to the one pledged point of attraction. She relied on a benign Providence to protect the man of her heart and choice through the manifold dangers of his perilous undertakings, and restore him to her for their mutual happiness and supreme reward. Ultimately that happiness was realized; and I am bound to say that a more perfect state of married felicity could not be imagined. Ah me, that it should prove of so brief a span! At Aston Abbott, in the quiet rural scenery by the vale of Aylesbury, enjoying what they wished of neighbouring society, and entertaining attached friends at home, surely their life was a pleasant one, and, above

* Captain Weddell, who was, at the peace, a Master in the Royal Navy, in 1825 published an account of his mercantile voyage in the brig "Jane," of 100, and cutter "Beaufoy," of 65 tons. His mission was in search of the haunts of fur-seals; but his love of bold adventure and geographical research impelled him far beyond the resorts of animal life. At his utmost south there was nothing to be seen but an open sea. His narrative is not only valuable for seamen, but altogether so replete with anecdotes of dangerous incident, and evidence of cool determination and nautical skill, as to rank the name of Weddell high with the Hudsons, Baffins, Frobishers, and other cognate worthies of the olden times.

all, their tastes and habits and opinions were ever in accord: from the slightest to the greatest matters there was nothing but harmony. Three children blessed their union; and if ever an observer could affirm there were two human sympathies concentrated in one, it might have been affirmed of Sir James and Lady Ross, in their pleasant country retreat, endowed with a competency, delighting in the same recreations, charities, pursuits, loving together and beloved by all around them. I draw this picture with a faithful pencil: there is no over-colouring. It is most sorrowful to retrace the warm features; and yet I seem to dwell upon them till, to my darkening eyes, they appear as a vision, which must have been ideal, or, for this world, too bright to last.

A few swift years, and the icy hand of death robbed the brave seaman of his consort, and left him alone heart-stricken and desolate. It was sad to witness the despondency that fell upon his indomitable and elastic spirit—his vain efforts to shake it off for the sake of his children—his resort for even temporary relief to some of the scientific pursuits which had so long engaged his energies. He went out to join the Ordnance Survey. He returned to his desolate home, and sickened, and died. His powerful, manly frame yielded to the oppression of his too sensitive mind. I have said he was a man of strong affections, and his prostration and death under this one fatal blight proved the truth of my judgment. A weaker soul might have bent to the calamity; but his firm nature was not of the willow, but the oak, and the storm overthrew it. Altogether, in his sphere, in his daring enterprises, and in all his relations of public and private, philosophical and social life, few names are to be recorded with more honour than that of Sir James Clark Ross.

DR. KITCHENER.

DR. KITCHENER was a character. The march of intellect, as we call it, is treading character out, and it is becoming very rare to meet with a "real" original. In elder days, when characters were more plentiful, it was epigrammatically said of another, a dramatic and medical humorist—

"For physis and farces
His equal there scarce is,
His farces are physis:
His physis a farce is."

And so it might be said of Kitchener (only in prose, the words being intractable to verse), for medicating and book-making he had no equal: his medicating was book-making, and his book-making medicating! But his medication was not limited to two or three parts of the system: it was universal. There was no part or portion of the human frame that he did not take under his protection. Yet there were three especially favoured—the eye, the ear, and the stomach; for he was a great optician, a great musician, and a greater gastronome. And he was exceedingly good-natured withal. Though occasionally a little petulant, he speedily forgave offence, and refraternized with the offender. For instance, when one of his friends ridiculed his optical science, and told him, in ancient Latin phrase, about needing the aid *Beati Martini* (vulgarily rendered "all my eye and Betty Martin"), he saw and laughed at the joke without using his spectacles. Of his music he never tired; nor did it ever cross his mind that anybody else could resist being rapt in the elysium of his piano (of which more anon). His medical precepts and gastronomic practices were wonderfully combined, inasmuch that it was not always easy to tell, in partaking of what was set before you, whether you might be swallowing a meal or a pre-

scription at his hospitable, or, as the case might be, his hospital board.

Dr. Kitchener published a considerable quantity of miscellaneous literature, displaying the various accomplishments at which I have hinted; as, for example, "The Economy of the Eyes," "Observations on Vocal Music," "The Art of Invigorating and Prolonging Life," and "The Cook's Oracle," representing the particular subjects to which I have referred, *i.e.*, the optico-musico-medico-epigastro superabundance of his prolific talent. Seriously speaking, his multifarious endowments were not unworthy of a respectable mark, and his eccentricities were harmless and amusing.

The dinners at which he entertained a few of his intimates (generally six or eight, at most) were by no means so *bizarre* as rumour gave them out. If the oddities were there, there was always a fair counterbalance of the relishable and genuine. The very incongruities gave a zest to the treat. A tureen of soup, indeed, was not liked the better for having its ingredients explained, and the price—perhaps sixpence or sevenpence—recorded (though, after all, it was fairly palatable and nutritious); but, at any rate, it might be followed by a costly cut of a Severn salmon, and there was generally a joint, to save you from experimenting on the made dishes, which I must own seemed often to be of dubious quality, and rather dangerous to depend upon for a man with an appetite. The wines partook of the same mixed variety. They were of sundry kinds, and might be classed as good, bad, and indifferent: some especially recommended because they were quite new—fresh from the docks—or tawny from antiquity, or mellowed by age, or having a peculiar bouquet, or having "eaten up their crust." Fortunate it was at these meetings that the rule was *de gustibus non disputandum*: every one took what he most fancied, and did what he liked. Sometimes there might not be that ready overflowing supply which was more usual in these times than in our more temperate days, and the Doctor was deprived of his horizontal constitutional siesta for one hour after dinner. Sometimes mirthful jests were perpetrated, which might remind us of Peter Pleydell's high jinks, described by Sir Walter Scott. The story of the board hung up in the lobby has often been repeated: "Come at seven: go at eleven;" but it was not George Colman, but another hand, that painted in the little "it" after "go," which so materially altered the purport of the whimsical, and no longer judicious inscription. It was upon that occasion, I remember well, that Dr. Haslam, his most intimate friend, was one of the guests, Charles Kemble another, when, I think, it was Arnold got our host to be seated on his music-stool, and every composition, more admirable than the last, made the guests reluctant to leave. It was then that the practical joke of exhibiting the board with "go it at eleven" was carried out, and the meeting prolonged into the small hours of morning. At other times the Doctor's intimation of early hours was observed with all due decorum; for it must not be imagined that in yielding one night, such as I have described, to a merry mood for frolic, these feasts were other than temperate and decorous: they were rather distinguished for the "feast of reason," rendered more piquant, perhaps, by the nature of the material feast, and the wit provoked by the unconscious whimsicalities of the Doctor, who was really in earnest with what the world was so ready to take and treat as jest. Let it be also remembered that these were but the occasional relaxations of busy, hard-fagged men.

Dr. Haslam, to whom I have referred as the Doctor's intimate friend, was a very skilful mad-doctor, and

almost as great a humorist as Kitchener himself. When the "Cook's Oracle" was published it so happened that the editor of a periodical which reviewed new works was in the country, and had left the office of criticising any novelty in the charge of the gentleman referred to, than whom there could not be one found in London more competent for the task. He did perform it in a very entertaining style, but shockingly to disturb the *amour-propre* of the author, who rushed in fury to his bosom friend to seek counsel for implacable revenge. Haslem did not venture then to confess the authorship, for the Doctor declared that the injury was of a nature never to be forgiven. Haslam's account of the interview was ludicrous beyond description. In a few months, however, the "Cook's Oracle" was pacified and reconciled to every member of his committee of taste, whose praise of his unrivalled gourmety at the next meeting was potent enough to heal any wounds.

But, alas! even the "follies of the wise" must come to an end. The end of poor Kitchener's career was a melancholy one. A very agreeable evening party at Mr. Braham's,* redolent of charming music, was concluded by the usual *petit souper*, which means a rather luxurious supper. Sir John Stevenson and other musical celebrities were there, and Kitchener was in his glory. He forgot all about his own rule of retiring at eleven, and in the height of his enjoyment was above all delighted with a pet macaw, which would sit on the shoulder of our hostess, and, apparently listening to every fine movement, throw in a discord of its own. The mind when most disturbed or anxious, or even deeply depressed, is apt to fly into an opposite though temporary extreme, to be amused with trifles and play with idle pleasures. None present were aware that the droll attraction of the "foreign fowl" was serving as a screen to conceal a cloud of carking care, and helped to detain the Doctor for two hours or more beyond the magic eleven. Yet so it was—sad lesson to humanity. We learned afterwards that, owing to domestic circumstances, he had prepared a settlement which would inflict contingencies or restrictions on the inheritance of his son, and that the following day was fixed for his signature. At nine o'clock in the morning he was dead. His departure was unobserved: he was only fifty-two years old.

We could have better spared a better man; yet with all his faults he was inoffensive and kind-hearted.

THE BLUE BASKET.

A PHYSICIAN'S WARNING.

ONE of the happiest family parties I ever attended was at the house of a patient in R— Square, on New Year's Day, 1850. Our lady-hostess was a cheerful and accomplished woman, about forty-eight years of age, and we were assembled to commemorate the birthday of her youngest child, who had that day entered her fourth year. There were four other beautiful children, ranging from five to ten years; and, though I was an occasional visitor, they had never needed medical attendance from the time of their birth.

The party broke up about midnight; and I had scarcely

* There were wont to be, in the clubs and elsewhere, many arguments as to the age of this unrivalled tenor, who retained his wonderful powers almost untouched to the last; and numerous wagers were laid on the question—never to be determined. The permanency of such an organ of voice for more than half a century seemed incredible. In 1851, dining with him, he showed me a portrait of Mr. Palmer, and told me that it was under his management he made his first appearance in 1787. Braham was then still in full song.

fallen into my first sleep when a loud peal at the night-bell announced a professional visitor. I lost no time in descending to the hall, when I found a footman from my hostess of the previous night, who said that a sudden illness of one of the members of the family rendered my immediate attendance necessary. Wrapping myself in a cloak, I accompanied the servant to R— Square; but what a fearful change had come over the scene of our last night's enjoyment! Scarcely two hours had elapsed since I left the happy parents and their children in the possession of every blessing that health and competence could bestow, and now the youngest child was writhing in a death agony, and apparently labouring under all the symptoms of some dangerous poison. An emetic and the stomach-pump were at once resorted to; but the patient was evidently sinking under the injury previously inflicted on the coats of the stomach; so that before morning dawned on that sad family the little sufferer had passed to a state of rest.

In vain did we rack our ingenuity to find out whence the poison had come; but one thing was certain, by the analysis of the contents of the stomach, that sulphate of copper had been the cause of the child's death. The various utensils employed in the previous day's cookery were carefully examined, but no portion of the tin lining was in any case wanting; so that we were still left in a state of incertitude as to the cause of the deplorable calamity, and the coroner's inquest was necessarily one of accidental death.

About two months after this sad catastrophe I had occasion to visit the lady for some ailment, and I learned that two of the children were then labouring under spasmodic attacks of stomach disease, which, though not then violent, yet might ultimately lead to dangerous results. From what I then saw of the children's symptoms, I determined not to leave R— Square till I had traced these mysterious attacks to their origin. So, sending for some tests, I first examined the food that had lately been partaken of; but no appearance of copper presented itself. I then requested to be shown the nursery; and, as I was cautiously examining the room, a beautiful crystal basket attracted my attention. It had been one of the birthday gifts to the deceased child on the occasion mentioned at the beginning of this narrative. These baskets, when properly made, should consist of crystallized alum coloured with a vegetable body; and in that case a crystal would be harmless even if taken into the stomach. But the thought suddenly presented itself to my mind that they might be formed of very different materials. Might there not be *copper* as the colouring matter? I soon found that that was literally the fact. Removing a crystal from the basket, I dissolved it in a glass of water, which was nearly colourless. Then I requested the bereaved parent to furnish me with her "hartshorn bottle," in reality liquid ammonia; and, pouring a few drops into the glass, its contents at once became of a deep blue colour, proving the existence of a large quantity of a deadly poison, which had been employed to colour the basket. I then employed one of my own tests, consisting of prussiate of potash, and that gave a deep chocolate tinge, confirming the fact of the existence of the poisonous copper.

We then examined the basket, and found that the children, playing with it, had loosened several of the crystals, and, tempted by their great beauty, had placed them between their lips, and ultimately swallowed them. It may hardly be necessary to state that the basket was immediately destroyed, and the result was, that no further symptoms of poisoning presented themselves in the family.

Varieties.

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANKS.—

1. More than 2900 Post Office Savings Banks are open daily for the receipt and payment of money, during the hours appointed for Money Order business.

2. Interest at the rate of £2 10s. per cent. is given on the money deposited in them.

3. Depositors in them have direct Government security for the prompt repayment of their money.

4. A depositor in any one of the Post Office Banks can continue his deposits at any other of such banks, without notice or change of book, and can withdraw his money at that Post Office Bank which is most convenient to him.

5. The greatest secrecy is observed with respect to the names of depositors in Post Office Banks, and the amounts of their deposits.

6. If a depositor in any legally established Savings Bank wishes to place his money in a Post Office Savings Bank, he should apply to the trustees of the old Savings Bank for a Certificate of Transfer (in the form prescribed by the 10th section of the Act 24 Victoria, cap. 14), and should pay the certificate into any Post Office Bank as if it were a cheque. By adopting this course the depositor will avoid trouble and the risk of carrying cash from one bank to the other.

7. Married women may deposit money in the Post Office Savings Bank, and money so deposited will be repaid to the depositor, unless her husband gives notice, in writing, of marriage, and claims payment of the deposits.

8. Money may be deposited by or on behalf of minors. Depositors over seven years of age are treated as persons of full age; but minors under seven years of age cannot withdraw their deposits until after they have reached the age of seven.

9. Friendly Societies, duly certified by the Registrar of Friendly Societies, may deposit their funds, without limitation of amount, in the Post Office Savings Bank; but a copy of their rules must previously be sent to the Postmaster-General.

10. Charitable Societies and Penny Banks may also deposit their funds; but a copy of their rules must first be sent to the Postmaster-General. Especial aid is given to Penny Banks established in connection with the Post Office Banks.

11. Applications to the Chief Office on the business of Post Office Savings Banks, and the replies sent thereto, are free from charge for postage.

12. If any additional information be required with respect to Post Office Savings Banks, it can be obtained at any Post Office, or by application to

THE CONTROLLER,
Savings Bank Department,
General Post Office,
London, E.C.

ADDING A COUNTY TO ENGLAND.—An important meeting of the magistrates of the counties of Norfolk and Lincolnshire was lately held at King's Lynn, for the purpose of defining the boundaries of the counties of Norfolk and Lincolnshire in the large tract of land called Wingland. It appeared that the reclaimed land proposed to be divided consisted of about 5000 acres actually brought under cultivation, and above 1000 acres as yet only partially reclaimed. This work of reclamation is part of the original scheme of making a new county, which was to be called Victoria County; and the district, which now presents the aspect of highly cultivated and richly productive fields, was, but a few years ago, a dreary waste of alluvial mud, over which each tide passed. But the immediate cause of the reclamation has been the operation of the New Outfall Act. The magistrates having agreed to the boundary-line, which gives nearly an equal amount to either county, gave directions for the line to be marked out. This is to be done by stone posts or landmarks. It should be mentioned that this is but one portion of a very large tract of land that is being, through engineering skill, taken from what has been known as the Wash, but which would seem to have been, ages back, dry land, as the immense submarine forest stretching across the mouth of the Wash off Hunstanton indicates. Many thousands of acres have also been already reclaimed through the operation of the Norfolk estuary scheme.

"LIVES" OF BANK NOTES.—The average period which each denomination of London notes remains in circulation has been calculated, and is shown by the following authentic account of the number of days a bank note issued in London remains

in circulation:—£5 note, 72·7 days; £10, 77·0; £20, 57·4; £30, 18·9; £40, 13·7; £50, 38·8; £100, 28·4; £200, 12·7; £300, 10·6; £500, 11·8; £1000, 11·1. The exceptions to these averages are few, and therefore remarkable. The time during which some notes remain unrepresented is reckoned by the century. On the 27th of September, 1846, a £50 note was presented, bearing date 20th of January, 1743. Another, for £10, issued on the 12th of November, 1762, was not paid till the 28th April, 1845. Stolen and lost notes are generally long absentees. The former usually make their appearance soon after a great horse-race or other sporting event, altered or disguised so as to deceive bankers, to whom the bank furnishes a list of the numbers and dates of all stolen notes. Carelessness or accidents give the bank enormous profits. In the forty years between 1792 and 1832 there were outstanding notes of the Bank of England—presumed to have been lost or destroyed—amounting to £1,330,000 odd, every shilling of which was clear profit to the bank.—*Cyclopædia of Commercial Anecdotes.*

DANES AND GERMANS IN HOLSTEIN.—In point of expansiveness, enterprise, and perseverance, the Dane has found a dangerous rival in his Teutonic neighbour. From the darkest ages the nobles, the Rittershaft of German Holstein, contrived to gain possession of the finest estates of Danish Schleswig. Even at the present day the Holsteiner, the Hanoverian, the Mecklenburgian, are buying not merely the Schleswiger, but even the Jutlander, out of house and home; whilst, by a strange coincidence, the wealthiest Copenhagen merchants are, by a variety of causes, induced to give the Swedish land, in Schonen, a preference for the investment of their money. The invading nature of the German is perceptible everywhere, all round the limits of the ancient empire, far out into Magyar, Slavonic, and all other, except Italian lands. It is especially observable in these Danish provinces, both of the mainland and the islands. German industry monopolizes the trade, especially the petty trade of the minor towns. Trade begets capital: capital buys up the land. To the Dane hardly any alternative is left except emigration, or a hard lot as the drudge, the serf of the German. Can there be any doubt as to his choice? At Flensburg, at Apenrade, at Hadersleben, the people are either purely German or utterly Germanized: the rural population is mainly Danish.—*Gallenga's "Denmark."*

THE AUTHORSHIP OF "JUNIUS."—Whilst arranging some papers for Mrs. Ryves, preparatory to her case coming on in the Probate Court, I accidentally found, among other manuscripts, the following:—

"London, Jan. 3, 1772.

"Lord Chatham hereby agrees to indemnify Doctor James Wilmot for all the risks and dangers that the said Doctor J. Wilmot may be subject to in the continuation of the letters of Junius. Authorizing the payment of £170 to J. W., on account of printing and publishing the work. (Signed) "CHATHAM."

Also there was a paper note or memorandum, written on a leaf in a pocket-book, or what appears to have been a pocket-book leaf:—

"I consent that Dr. Wilmot may my letters of Philo-Junius.

"J. DUNNING.

"1771."

The foregoing seems to authenticate the article on the subject of "Junius" in the "Panorama" for November, 1813, which was read by some gentlemen at the British Museum a few months since. It is asserted also in this magazine that Mr. Woodfall, the printer, recognised the initials "J. W." as the author of "Junius," and that he also received a gratuity from Lord Warwick in order to meet the expenses for printing.—I remain, Sir, yours, etc.,

H. COLEBY.

Surbiton Hill.

METROPOLITAN HOUSELESS POOR LAW.—The new Act to make provision for distributing the charge of relief of certain classes of poor persons over the whole of the metropolis has been issued. The guardians of parishes or unions in the metropolis may keep account of the relief afforded daily in food and articles to the houseless, from eight o'clock in the evening till eight o'clock in the morning, and, on a certificate of the Poor-law Auditors and of the Poor-law Board that proper wards had been provided, obtain payment from the Metropolitan Board of Works out of their general fund. Guardians may provide proper vagrant wards and casual wards, and be reimbursed the outlay, under this Act.